

Farm Service Agency

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FSA: www.fsa.usda.gov
USDA: www.usda.gov
Farm Bill:
www.usda.gov.farmbill

Hours:

Monday-Friday
8:00 AM-4:30 PM

County Committee:

Jack Seiler
Raymond Lodge
Betty Bouris
Efren Castro

Acting County**Executive Director:**

Rosalinda Singh

County Executive**Director Trainee:**

Marilynn Wells

Staff:

Maria Padron PT
MariAna Montes PT

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Riverside/San Diego Counties

FSA NEWS

July 2008

NOTICE: 2008 Disaster Programs Requires Crop Insurance or NAP Coverage

Eligibility “Buy-In” Deadline is September 16, 2008

The recently-enacted Farm Bill legislates 2008 disaster programs covering losses to crops, trees/vines/bushes, forage, and other losses due to adverse weather. These programs require the crops you planted, grew, produced or were prevented from planting to have been covered by federal crop insurance or FSA’s Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). *All* of your crops on *all* of your acreage must be covered, not only those acres that suffered losses.

Due to the late passage of the Farm Bill on May 22, 2008, you will be given an opportunity to “buy-in” to the disaster program by paying a \$100/crop catastrophic crop insurance or NAP service fee for any 2008 crops that are not already covered by crop insurance or NAP.

This eligibility “buy-in” must be completed by September 16, 2008 at your FSA Office to satisfy the requirement for total CI/NAP coverage. Note that it does not provide you with crop insurance indemnities or NAP benefits. Once this requirement is met, you may be eligible for one or more of the following 2008 programs:

- **Supplemental Revenue Program (SURE):** Covers crop revenue losses from quantity or quality deficiencies in disaster declared counties, contiguous counties, or in cases where the overall production loss exceeds 50%
- **Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP):** Compensates livestock owners for forage losses due to drought. Additionally, losses due to wildfire will be covered on public lands.
- **Tree Assistance Program (TAP):** Provides for partial reimbursement for replanting, salvage, pruning, debris removal and land preparation for orchardists and nursery tree growers if losses exceed 15%.
- **Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish (EALHF):** Emergency relief to producers of livestock (including horses), honey bees, and farm-raised fish. Covers losses from disasters such as adverse weather or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires not adequately covered by any other disaster program. This program is authorized at the discretion of the Secretary.

Another 2008 disaster program authorized by the Farm Bill is the **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)** for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality. This is the only disaster program that **does not** require crop insurance or NAP.

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Further details of all of these disaster programs, including signup information, will be provided at a later date. Note that additional requirements exist for disaster programs eligibility.

Bottom Line: To be eligible for Disaster Programs in 2008, you must pay the fees for the eligibility buy-in at your FSA Office by **September 16, 2008**. Contact your local FSA Office for more information.

County Committee Nomination Deadline

County committees play a crucial role in helping county office staff implement the 2008 Farm Bill. Due to the importance of County Committee members and their roles, producers are encouraged to participate in the 2008 FSA County Committee election process by nominating an eligible candidate by the **August 1, 2008** deadline.



FSA County Committee members make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other important agricultural issues. Nationwide, there are more than 7,800 farmers and ranchers serving on FSA County Committees. Committees consist of three to five members who are elected by eligible local producers.

The area served by our County Committee is divided up into four Local Administrative Areas (LAAs). One member on the committee represents each LAA and serves a 3-year term. Each year, an election is held in an LAA to replace the committee member whose three-year term is expiring. **This year, LAA #1 (West End area of Riverside County) is up for election.**

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign form FSA-669A. The form and other valuable information about FSA county committee elections are available online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>; click on News & Events, then County Committee Elections. Nomination forms for the 2008 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on **August 1, 2008**.

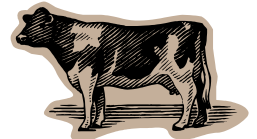
Individuals may nominate themselves or others as candidates. Also, organizations representing socially disadvantaged minorities and women farmers or ranchers may also nominate candidates.

FSA will mail ballots to producers beginning November 3, 2008. The voted ballots are due back at the local county office either via mail or in person by December 1, 2008. Newly elected committee members and alternates take office January 1, 2009.

If you are interested in being a candidate in this year's election, please contact our office before August 1st to request a nomination form. Nomination forms are also available at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>. Spanish versions are also available.

Signup Deadline for the 2005, 2006, and 2007 Livestock Programs

Livestock owners have until July 18, 2008, to enroll in the 2005 - 2007 **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)**. Signup began on September 10, 2007. The program provides financial aid to livestock producers who suffered livestock losses due to natural disasters from January 1, 2005 through December 31, 2007.



To be eligible for LIP you must enroll by close of business **July 18, 2008**. No late filed applications will be accepted!

If you would like to apply for the LIP program, feel free to call our office at (760) 347-3675 ext. 2.

Signup Underway for 2008 DCP

Producers have until **September 30, 2008** to sign up for the 2008 Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program (DCP). Producers can fill out their 2008 DCP contract at their local FSA County Office. Producers can also sign-up online.



FSA computes DCP payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. For 2008, eligible producers may request to receive an advance payment of 22 percent of the direct payment for each commodity associated with the farm. FSA will issue advance direct payments as soon as practical after enrollment. Final direct payments will be issued after October 1, 2008. Counter-cyclical payments vary depending on market prices, and are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is below its target price (which takes into account the direct payment rate, market price and loan rate).

For all eligibility requirements or addition information, contact our FSA Office and ask for Maria.

Crop Disaster Program

Signup underway for Quality Losses



Signup for quality losses under the Crop Disaster Program (CDP) began on June 23, 2008. Producers can apply for crop quality losses at their local FSA office.

County FSA Offices have been conducting sign up since last fall for *quantity losses* for the 2005-2007 crops, and now we are ready to conduct sign up for *quality losses*.

The CDP provides benefits to farmers who suffered losses to their 2005-2007 crops from natural disasters and related conditions. Producers who incurred qualifying quantity or quality losses in 2005, 2006 or 2007 may receive benefits for only one of these years. However, producers may apply for benefits for losses to multiple crops as long as the losses occurred in the same crop year.

Only producers who obtained crop insurance coverage or coverage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the year of loss will be eligible for CDP benefits. Producers must have suffered quality losses of at least 25 percent to be eligible for CDP Quality Loss. Producers may receive assistance for both quantity and quality losses. However, the total quantity and quality assistance, together with any crop insurance or NAP payment received for the same crop and the value of the crop production not lost, must not exceed 95 percent of the total value of the crop absent the disaster. For all eligibility requirements or additional information, contact your local FSA office.

Farm Reconstitutions

In Farm Service Agency terms, farms are **constituted** to group all tracts having the same owner and the same operator under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm **reconstitution** is necessary.

The reconstitution—or recon—is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. To be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by **August 1** for farms enrolled in the Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program. If 2008 DCP direct payments have already been issued on the farm, the reconstitution will be effective for 2009 unless the payments are refunded. Also reconstituted farms must re-enroll in the DCP **within 30 days**, but no later than **September 30, 2008**.

New Crop Certification Deadline

For 2008, the final crop acreage reporting date for most crops has been extended to **August 15, 2008**. Late fees will not be applied if acreage reports are filed by August 15 and all other reporting requirements are met. Filing an accurate and timely report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of Farm Service Agency programs.

Welcome New CED!!

The Riverside/San Diego County Committee recently selected Marilyn Wells as this office's new County Executive Director. Marilyn is a native Californian and recently moved to the Coachella Valley from Lancaster, California, where she was employed by FSA for over 21 years as a Program Technician. Marilyn is now in the Indio office on a full-time basis and is familiarizing herself with the office and is assisting staff and program applicants with the many programs currently in process. We are happy to have Marilyn on board and everyone that works with her will benefit from her many years of experience and program knowledge.

Rosalinda Singh will resume management duties in the Imperial County office on a full-time basis once Marilyn's transition and training are complete. Rosa states: "Thank you to the current and past Riverside/San Diego county committees, it has truly been an honor working for you; thanks also to all the farmers and ranchers I've worked with in the last 3 years, it has been a pleasure talking to and working with you as well. I leave you in very capable hands, please stop by FSA in El Centro & say hello if ever in the Imperial Valley. "

Dates to Remember

July 18, 2008	LIP Deadline
August 1, 2008	County Committee Nomination Deadline
August 1, 2008	Reconstitution Deadline
August 15	2008 Acreage Reports Deadline
Sept. 16, 2008	Disaster Eligibility Buy-In Deadline for 2008
Sept. 30, 2008	DCP Deadline
December 1, 2008	Deadline to receive voted ballots for county committee election
Continues	CDP 2005-2007 Sign Ups

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Service Agency
Riverside/SanDiego County FSA Office
82-901 Bliss Avenue
Indio CA 92201

Visit our Web site at: www.fsa.usda.gov/ca

SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS

Special accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impaired, or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, please call our office at (661) 942-9549.

CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLAINT PROCESS

Any person, class or group of persons may file a discrimination complaint within 180 days of an alleged discriminatory action. Complaints may be filed in writing or orally with the agency head, any designated agency official or the Secretary of Agriculture, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. Assistance in filing a complaint can be obtained by calling or visiting any FSA office.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance programs. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202)-720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.